

TAPC-PDO-PA

January 2002

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

SUBJECT: Republic of Korean Presidential Unit Citation

1. Paragraph 9-9, AR 600-8-22, Military Awards, states that during the period of military operations against an armed enemy and, for 1 year thereafter, Army Component commanders or major Army commanders are authorized to accept foreign unit decorations tendered to brigades, battalions, or smaller units under their command.
2. Section 7342, title 5, United States Code, governs the acceptance of foreign decorations and service awards. This law specifically states that awards from foreign governments may be accepted only in recognition of active combat service or for outstanding or unusually meritorious performance. Also, it is the policy of the Department of Defense and the Department of the Army that activities normally undertaken by the Armed Forces of the United States in support of an ally during peacetime are not considered sufficient to merit foreign individual or unit decorations.
3. The 2d Infantry Division was awarded the ROKPUC under two combat environments, in September 1950 and October 1953. Both awards cited the extraordinary performance of the division during the Korean War. Exceptions to the policy were made in 1971 for the 7th Infantry Division on the occasion of the division's departure and primarily cited Korean War achievements and in 1982 and 1994 to the 2d Infantry Division. This exception authorized temporary wear of the ROKPUC while assigned to the 2d Infantry Division.
4. The policy of not accepting foreign unit awards for peacetime accomplishments is not new. Historically, from World War I forward, various foreign governments have proposed such awards to US units. Except for wartime accomplishments, the unit awards were not generally accepted. This policy has served the Army well throughout its modern history. Factors against accepting foreign unit awards are as follows:
 - a. The 2d Infantry Division and soldiers assigned to it over the past 35 years would receive a foreign unit decoration under less stringent criteria than those received by other units. While significant, the service of these soldiers was essentially the same as the service of other soldiers performing duty with US deterrent forces worldwide.
 - b. It could encourage other friendly foreign nations to proffer unit awards for peacetime activities thus losing the integrity and prestige of the PUC.

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5. This action was coordinated with the Command Judge Advocate who opined that since no combat service is implicated it would be inappropriate to support authorization for permanent wear. Additionally, an informal inquiry to the Office of the Secretary of Defense (Policy and Readiness) Awards Policy confirmed that the DOD policy regarding the acceptance of foreign unit awards in peacetime has not changed, i.e., foreign unit awards are only accepted for active combat service.

6. As an exception to Army uniform policy, soldiers who are assigned to the 2d Infantry Division may continue to wear the ROKPUC while serving with the unit in the Host nation. However, upon reassignment from the 2d Infantry Division, these soldiers will no longer be authorized to wear the ROKPUC on their Army uniform.

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